



THE

# IDLE AND INDUSTRIOUS

# MEMER.

by Alonzo Delano, 1864  
1874



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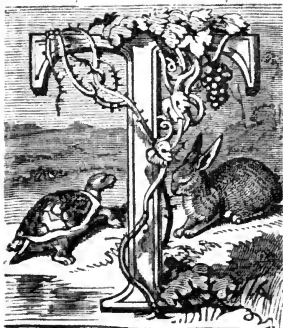
## P R E F A C E .

THE pretensions of the little book thus given to the public, are humble. The designer of the pictures (Mr. Nahl) has succeeded in a life-like portrayal of scenes in the mines; the engraver (Mr. Armstrong) has brought his drawings out in masterly relief; while the highest boon claimed by the author, is to have contributed a few descriptive verses with a moral—the only recommendation, perhaps, which they contain.

Of similar publications issued from the press of California, it is questionable whether any have come so near to the portrayal of actual mining life as this. There are but two courses for the miner to pursue—one of industry and sobriety; the other of indolence and vice. These are generally shunned or indulged according to the early education, natural tastes, or degrees of temptation by which the miner is surrounded. Fortunate is he whose better judgment leads him to an emulation of the honesty and sedulous devotion which are represented as characterising the triumphant hero of this little poem.



# THE IDLE AND INDUSTRIOUS MINER.



TWO school-boy friends, with buoyant hearts,  
 And grown to man's estate,  
 Repaired to California's shores,  
 To fill their cup of fate:  
 Endowed with noble gifts of mind,  
 And vigorous in health,  
 Their future seemed a harvest-field,  
 Abundant in its wealth.  
 Lured by a hope of rapid gain,  
 The mines at once they sought,

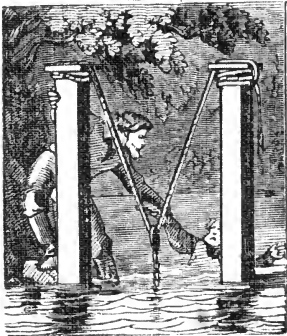
Contented with a cabin home,  
 In a secluded spot;  
 Their start in life was equal, and  
 At first the race was fair,  
 But soon resembled that between  
 The TORTOISE AND THE HARE.

*Advice Grati.*

You know Charley I have done all I  
could for you and ain't tired yet. But  
take off those clothes and buy a real  
miners dress and as if he change  
of costume and ha-  
bits dont make you  
a happier man.

*Petition.*

I've had the worst luck of any man  
in California. All the claims I  
bought turned out failures. I went  
home for money to start again, and  
would you believe it they refused  
to send it - say something about  
their families - and that sort  
of things.



EN do not always realize

Their cherished dreams of youth,  
For often wormwood lies concealed  
Within the bud of truth.

While one the glittering prize plucks down,  
Another's reach is vain—  
Ambition dies within him, and  
He never tries again.

'Tis thus our story takes its rise,  
To trace the different ends—

The efforts, triumphs and mishaps

Of these respective friends ;—

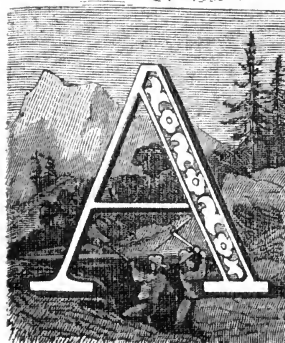
How nobly one achieved the goal

Of fortune and renown,

And how the other's sun of life

In clouds of shame went down.





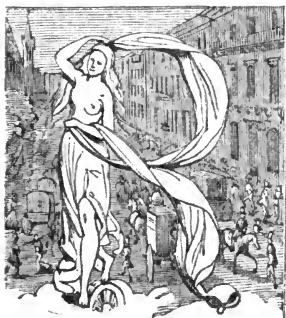
ND now, behold! at early dawn,  
 Before the mists have fled,  
 Our zealous hero seeks his claim,  
 Beside a river's bed;  
 As yet unused to toil, his hands  
 Are cramped and numbed with pain,  
 But in his heart an honest pride  
 Forbids him to complain.  
 The future is a promised world,  
 In which his fortune lies,

And industry, alone, he feels,  
 Can win its golden prize.  
 Already, in the vale below,  
 He hears the pick and spade,  
 And hastes to greet the busy throng,  
 And join their delving trade.



AD, there should be a converse side  
 To such a pleasant view,  
 But history demands the pen  
 To frame its record true.  
 The early morn had come and gone,  
 And in the amber sky  
 The sun had slowly climbed his course  
 And stood at noonday high.  
 Nor sun, nor moon, nor thoughts of fame  
 Disturb the sluggard's rest,

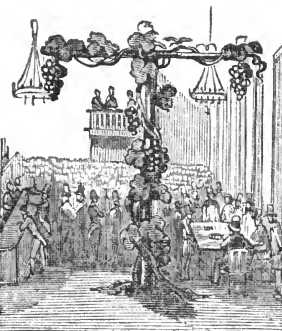
Last night's debauch has left its sting,  
 And borne away their zest.  
 This, then, is how the idler friend  
 Commenced a bad career,  
 So fatally and madly run  
 Within his mining year.



EQUITED toil! Eureka! Look!

And read within those eyes  
 Their speaking luster, as they dwell  
 Upon the glittering prize!  
 The vein is struck! ah, noble heart!  
 A thrill of joy is thine!—  
 A purer and a better thrill  
 Than that produced by wine.  
 A thousand thoughts of home, and bliss  
 Reserved for coming years

Have swiftly flashed across thy soul  
 And melted thee to tears—  
 Tears—not of grief, or vain regrets,  
 For thou art still a man—  
 But, thinking of thy poverty  
 And gazing in the pan!

URN to the other loitering friend  
 Yet on a drunken spree—  
 His tools neglected, and his face  
 The type of idiocy.  
 The bottle is his chief delight,  
 No care disturbs his brain,  
 He smokes, and chews, and yawns, and drinks,  
 And wakes and drinks again ;  
 Or when he leaves his cabin walls  
 To dig an hour or so,

Ill luck attends him,—so he thinks,—

Wherever he may go.

Forever armed with some excuse

He deems his cause is good,

Till want assails him at his door

And drives him forth for food.



MBITTERED at his low estate—

Unmindful of its cause—

The sluggard mopes away his hours

Indifferent to applause.

His noble friend appeals to him

To stimulate his pride,

By representing wealth to flow

On fortune's courted tide ;

He dilates on his own success,

Then offers half his claim

To share his fellow's wretchedness

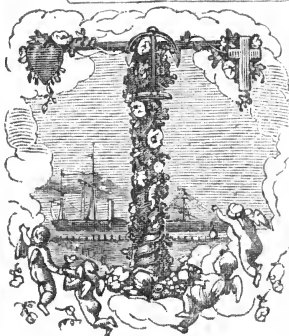
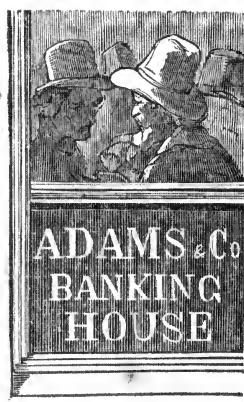
And rescue him from shame.

Alas! when emulation dies

There's no Promethean coal

To kindle up its wasted fires

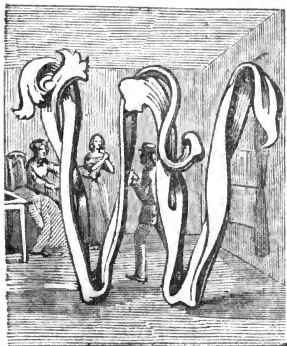
And re-illumine the soul!



THE DEUM! the banking-house is sought!

For, see, the well filled sack  
Our zealous hero proudly bears  
Upon his sturdy back ;  
A hundred envious eyes behold  
The nature of his gains—  
A hundred envious hearts desire  
The gold his sack contains ;  
But once secure within the vault  
Where Adams holds the key

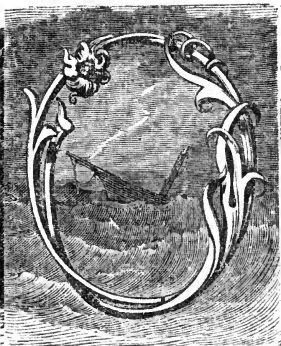
And little danger's to be feared  
From theft or treachery.  
A draft at three per cent. relieves  
The mind of every care,  
And when remitted safely home  
The drawer knows 'tis there!



HAT other heart could feel a thrill  
 Of pleasure more sincere  
 On hearing of his great success  
 Than that of "mother dear ;"  
 So down the thoughtful miner sits  
 Elate with joy to write,  
 His tools about him, and his "stew"  
 Before him, full in sight.  
 There's not a hope his breast contains—  
 An anguish or a fear,

But memory retains to break  
 Unto that mother's ear ;  
 He told her all, and asked her prayers  
 To keep his heart from guile :  
 And when he sweetly slept that night  
 His face revealed a smile.





H! woful picture of distress !

The idler takes his pen,  
His ragged coat and shaggy beard

Denote him worst of men ;  
But there is still within his soul

A principle of truth,  
Which he has borne unspotted through  
His days of well-trained youth.

"*Dear mother !*" this is what he writes,  
And saddened by the word,

He feels a gush of tenderness

Within his bosom stirred ;

With too much power it racks his mind,

And from the bottle's store

He turns the liquor out, and drinks

Till he can write no more.





ORN—Sabbath morning! at his door

The thoughtful miner sits,

His sister's Bible to peruse

As such a morn befits ;

The birds are sporting near his feet,

Rich flowers are by his side,

And as he reads, his heart resolves

That God shall be his guide.

He goes not where the noisy throng

Resort at games to play,

But profits by a goodly work

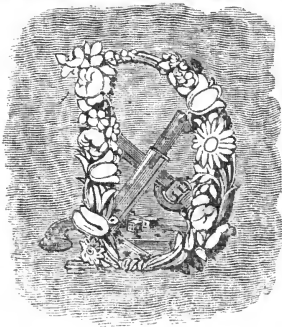
On this, a goodly day.

As twilight falls, his evening meal

In silence he partakes,

And soundly sleeping through the night

Again at sunrise wakes.



“EAR MOTHER!” it were well to pause

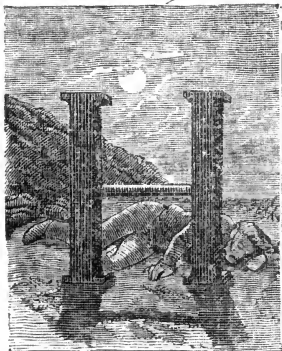
And leave the page unfilled  
Nor tell how deep in vice the hand  
That traced the line was skilled!

Amid a throng of curious men  
That Sabbath night it tossed  
The only coin the idler owned  
Upon a card, which lost.

“Make way!” a dealer sternly cries,  
Who hauls the money down;

“Make way!” the second one repeats,  
And hurls an angry frown.

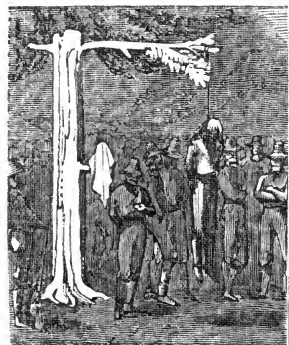
A dozen hands lent willing aid,  
And backward through the crowd  
They drew their humbled victim, whom  
They left subdued and cowed.



ANDS OFF!" a drunkard grown to be,

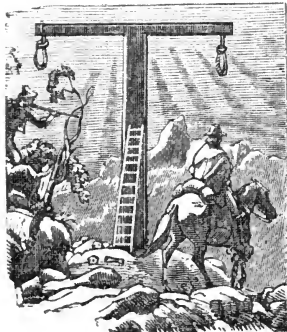
It were a bootless task  
To drag the idler from the bar  
While it contains a flask.  
His truest friend exhorts in vain—  
In vain the landlord's threat,  
He struggles for another glass  
On which his heart is set:  
In pity fill a bumper up,  
To quench his burning thirst!

He has no greater joy in life,  
And fate may do its worst.  
The moon shone softly down that night  
Where stupefied and pale,  
A senseless man deserted lay  
Within a quiet vale!



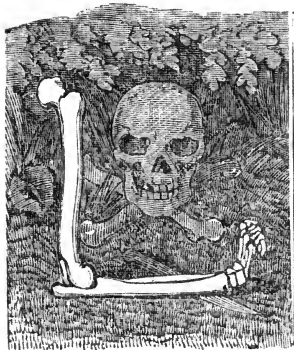
LY, thou guilty culprit, fly!  
 The fatal weapon aimed  
 Would doom thee to a felon's death,  
 For thou art thief proclaimed!  
 Fly to some cavern, where with wolves  
 Thy home may haply be—  
 Not one amid the mob bestows  
 A kindly thought on thee!  
 A gallows to thy maddened brain  
 Appears in frightful view,

And to avoid its frowning form  
 Seems more than thou canst do.  
 This is remorse—alas! too late,  
 For months of wasted time;  
 Before thy better nature changed  
 And thou wert steeped in crime!



THROUGH forest and on road pursued  
 The guilty man at last  
 Escapes unhurt, and lays him down  
 To think upon the past;  
 Oh, God! how sorrowful his groans—  
 How bitter flow his tears,  
 When recollection paints the hues  
 Of boyhood's brighter years!  
 Concealed within a worn-out claim,  
 He deems himself secure,

And finds his guilt the only thing  
 His thoughts cannot endure.  
 He gazes on the rattlesnake  
 With neither dread nor care;  
 But yields himself completely up  
 A victim to despair.



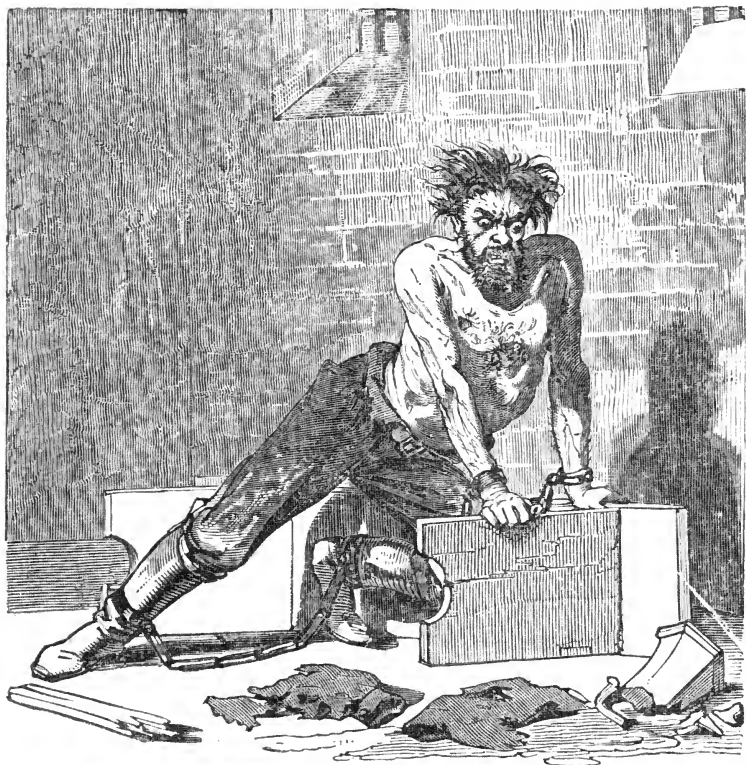
ONG hours past—thrice had the day

Its course of glory sped,  
Yet, on that wretched man, the sun  
No ray of comfort shed.

By hunger driven forth at last,  
He begged a crust of bread,  
But found the hearts of those he asked  
To all his pleadings dead.

“My God!” he cried, “and must I starve  
Where Plenty yields her store!”

And seizing on a tray of food  
Rushed wildly for the door.  
The landlord struck him with a knife  
Before he could depart;  
At which the frenzied culprit turned  
And stabbed him to the heart!

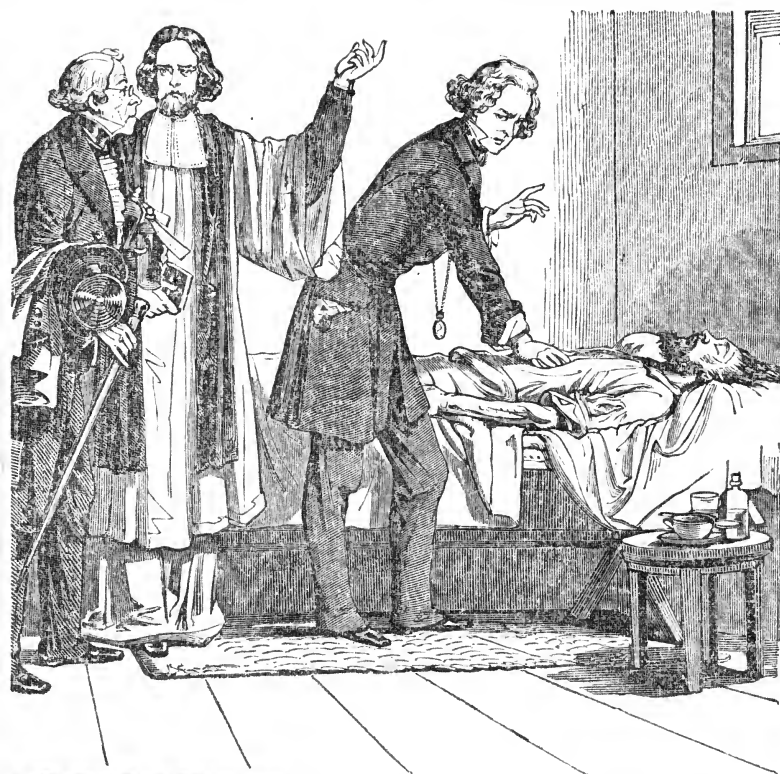


ENCLOSED within a prison's walls  
 Through all the dreary night  
 A madman's frantic cries resound  
 To curd the blood with fright ;  
 A pack of prowling wolves have caught  
 The rattling of his chains,  
 And pause to mingle with the sound  
 Their own unearthly strains !  
 Not long that noble frame shall writhe ;  
 Not long that strength be shown ;

For death is smiling through the bars,  
 And claims them for his own.

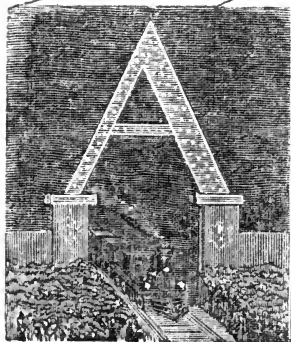
E'en while those startled eye-balls glare,  
 The heart grows icy cold ;  
 He falls—what else concerns his fate  
 Is easy to be told.





ROUND the felon's corpse there stand  
 Three men of gentle mein,  
 By whom such sights as these, perhaps,  
 Had many times been seen.  
 The earliest and fondest friend  
 Bends o'er it, filled with grief;  
 The man of God has named the cross  
 And its repentant thief.  
 To die from home, alas! is sad;  
 But oh, far sadder yet,  
 To feel our crimes are what the world  
 Refuses to forget.  
 Then let a tear of pity fall,  
 Nor curse the idler's doom.  
 He was a miner—may his faults  
 Lie buried in his tomb!





H! holy spectacle of love!

A sister's gentle hand—

A pious mother's fond embrace

Are what its joys command!

The long lost son is back again

From California's shore—

The brother's ample purse is filled

With pounds of shining ore!

He brings them home his winning smile—

A form robust and strong—

And soul unspotted by the crimes

Of those he fell among.

He tells his friends, that wish to know

The cause of his success,

That those who seek the mines must work,

AND DRINK AND GAMBLE LESS!

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